The COMMONWEAL

VOLUME XXXV *January* 16, 1942 NUMBER 13

THE WEEK 307

END OF PLOWING UNDER, I
T. Swann Harding 310

NATIONAL COMMUNISM IN GERMANY
Otto Strasser 313

LIEF ERICSSON TO 1942
Bonaventure Schwinn, O.S.B. 316

VIEWS AND REVIEWS *Michael Williams* 318

THE STAGE *David Burnham* 319

THE SCREEN *Philip T. Hartung* 320

BOOKS OF THE WEEK 321
Deep South—My India, My America—When Painting Was in Glory—Windswept—A Leaf in the Storm—Whom Do You Say?—God Is My Fuehrer—France Speaking—Getting Us into War—Briefers.

THE INNER FORUM 326

THE COMMONWEAL *is indexed in the Reader's Guide, Catholic Periodical Index* and *Catholic Bookman.*
Commonweal Publishing Co., Inc., 386 Fourth Avenue, New York
Annual Subscription: U. S. and Canada, $5.00; Foreign, $6.00
Editors: PHILIP BURNHAM, EDWARD SKILLIN, JR.
HARRY LORIN BINSSE, *Managing Editor;* MICHAEL WILLIAMS, *Special Editor;* C. G. PAULDING, *Literary Editor;* JOHN BRUBAKER, *Advertising Manager.*

No Maginot Line

THE ANNUAL MESSAGE on the state of the nation is delivered by the elected head of the Executive. On January 6, the country knew too that the President is Commander-in-Chief. As such it is a clear part of his duty to inspire confidence in the people and in the armed forces of the nation. Were he to do otherwise, his leadership would not be worth having. The message accomplished this purpose fully and admirably. It was almost a perfect specimen of what good propaganda should be—it served to promote faith in the rightness of the American cause and the wrongness of the cause of our enemies; it radiated confidence in ultimate victory without at the same time suggesting that victory would be easy. By the very boldness of its assertions of American production it was heartening. Above all its use of simple English and vivid metaphor—"we must raise our sights all along the production line"—was in the best Roosevelt tradition.

Even those most critical of the past decades and most uncertain of the future at the end of the war can find comfort in the forthright disclaimer of any *status quo* war aims: "but we of the United Nations are not making all this sacrifice of human effort and human lives to return to the kind of world we had after the last world war." This is not as specific, perhaps, as some would like to have it, but the mere saying of it is a great deal. At least no one need feel that this immense struggle is dedicated to the restoration of specific boundaries and specific political set-ups, many of which were bad in themselves and themselves helped to produce the present horror.

The speech also minced no words as to what the American war effort would cost, not only in terms of dollars—terms largely meaningless in the economic world of today—but in terms of productive effort and consumption of goods and labor. There was no pretense in the speech that we could have a "business as usual" policy with a left-handed attempt at producing the technical sinews of war. This frankness, this setting of production levels higher than the public had ever dreamed, serves two purposes. It brings home how wasteful is modern warfare in terms of the energy and materials it burns up—Hitler himself pointed to this with bitterness in one of his holiday speeches. It serves also to make Americans realize a little more vividly the tasks they must accomplish if they would achieve victory.

But perhaps the most important aspect of the speech, the new thing which it contained (for none of its individual assertions or hopes or aspirations was new), is the tone throughout all its paragraphs. It is a tone of toughness—the President did not hesitate to use the very word—which insists that no war can be won behind defenses, however elaborate or carefully planned, but must be won by taking the offensive wherever opportunity offers and wherever such action can harass the enemy. On the surface, a war of attrition may seem attractive, in that it involves less risk. Yet if there is any lesson we should have learned from the last war, it is that the siege is the most expensive of the instruments of warfare, both physically and morally. The President wants no siege, whether we be the besieged or the besiegers.

Farmers and the War

THIS WEEK THE COMMONWEAL is happy to present the first of a two-part discussion of the new American farm program by T. Swann Harding of the US Department of Agriculture. The current installment is largely historical and explains why American agriculture suffered such a decline after 1920. It carries the farm story right down to the present day. Next week Mr. Harding will present in some detail the government's farm plans for 1942 and following.

One of the most interesting aspects of the Administration's present procedure is the emphasis on its democratic methods of arriving at decisions. A technique has been devised whereby local committeemen can make their wishes known directly in Washington, where nationwide decisions are made on a more and more over-all planning basis. Mr. Harding likes to contrast this procedure with similar orders handed down from

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Berlin, but it must not be overlooked that as the drive for greater production intensifies, the stronger will be the official temptation to use the new mechanism without waiting for consultation with dirt farmers, farm organizations and agricultural experts. That's the way things go in wartime.

Plans for increased production in the "Food for Freedom" program still include more hogs, poultry and dairy products for Britain. They also call for more canning tomatoes, peas and soybeans. Since the war in the Far East, they ask for more vegetable oils to replace the palm and coconut oils we normally obtain from the Orient. Farm journals are also urging their subscribers to prepare more beef cattle for market in 1942. They are of the opinion that despite labor shortages and restrictions on metal for new farm machinery, the American farmer will fare well during the war. At the same time these journals are urging their constituents to set their financial houses in order now in anticipation of the inevitable recession.

One prospect for the farm areas in 1942 is deplorable. The pressure for economies in non-defense expenditures (of some $1,000,000,000 annually) threatens the program, if not the very existence, of the Farm Security Administration. It also imperils the Rural Electrification Administration which is largely responsible for raising the American farms served by electricity from 10.9 to 34.9% in six years. By supplying power where raw materials are, and by its educational program, the REA is rehabilitating hundreds of rural communities. These agencies, which over a period of years have built up the most constructive social program in the whole range of New Deal activities, are threatened with grave curtailment or suspension just when their policies are beginning to prove their worth. The FSA has in operation a practical tenant purchase program that is making responsible owners out of formerly insecure tenants. It has been most successful in extending rehabilitation loans to needy farmers. It is making great strides on such problems as those of migratory workers, the sharecroppers, the cultivators of submarginal land.

Even greater are the possibilities that lie ahead for this enlightened New Deal agency. It has merely begun on the vital national problem of adequate medical care in rural areas. It is equipped to make up for the farm labor dislocations due to military service. The experience these officials have had with resettlement make them the logical ones to supervise the placing of millions of breadwinners no longer needed by the armed forces or by war industries on land which would provide much of their family's sustenance.

With so considerable a sound investment in the nation's future already made, so much constructive rehabilitation work already in process and such possibilities for useful service in wartime and the difficult post-war years, why scuttle the FSA? This may be the time to throw all mere made work out the window, but it would be poor economy indeed to interrupt the invaluable work of the FSA and the REA for the sake of a few odd millions.

Life Is for the Living

IMMEDIATELY after the Feast of the Nativity, which brought the Son of God among us as our Brother, and consecrated childhood forever, the American Sociological Society convening in New York received from a Census Bureau expert the glad tidings that America is headed toward the one-child family and will reach it in about forty years. We must not imply that Dr. Glick gave this out as joyful news: his concern is with objective figures. We were thinking rather of those who would solve economic problems by the moronic mathematics of birth control. To them, the one-child family will presumably be the realization of a wonderful dream—if, that is, the chaos wrought in our national prosperity by a shrinking population, with its inflexibly decreasing spiral of demand, has not wiped them out by inanition before they can enjoy the paradise they have labored to create. But aside from the economic fallacy behind this frightening population trend, and aside from the distorted and evil teachings deliberately aimed at making artificial birth limitation acceptable to the human conscience, there is another aspect which claims attention. There is more here than a mistake in economics; more even than the incredible folly of supposing a way has been found of having sex for nothing. There is also a disease of fatigue and querulousness, a revulsion from mere life. The sense of its multiplication, its variety, its robust impact, of the infinity of agitation and energizing shut up in each separate new personality, are overwhelming to the tired nerves and brains which do so much of the rationalistic thinking. These people are soothed by the idea of a limited, manageable river of life, with themselves mostly doing the managing. The mighty, unpredictable torrent terrifies them. The old strong central conception that life must hand on life, the old careless generosity about life, the sense that whatever happened, new life was always good, always a triumph to be celebrated against the common human doom, the old blind trust in life, are less and less apparent. And yet one need not even go to God for approval of these things; nature, the very goddess of rationalism, is on their side too. Life is for the living. Wherever the sense of this is strongest, the centers of life will be. This is an ineluctable law, which may heaven grant we learn to spell out before it is too late.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Our Embassy in Vichy

THE American policy of remaining present in France and of strengthening, by the encouragement of that presence, French resistance to the German pressure and to the temptation of the New Order, was fortified in an immense degree by our entry into the war against Germany. There can be no longer any question of our asking others to accomplish a task which we reject for ourselves, no suspicion of our establishing a frontier against tyranny and leaving that frontier to be manned by others. We have left the cheering section and our action is related to our words. Wherever there is an American ambassador he stands for a known and definite purpose.

Our ambassadors in France have not always been in so clearly defined a position. Before the war and at the start of the war, Mr. Bullitt's personal aversion for the nazi régime was interpreted widely in France as representing—as indeed it did—the growing aversion of his compatriots. But it was interpreted, further, as a promise of aid, a hint of intervention—the assistance and the solidarity which were not forthcoming then and which now are facts. Many Frenchmen, aware that effective intervention could not be immediate, felt strongly at the time that their country's policy in regard to Germany should not be over-influenced by the American Ambassador's enthusiasm. They were obliged to measure the immediate chances of success, the imminent peril of failure. One of those lucid and most unhappy Frenchmen who did not believe in the Maginot Line remarked in those days: "If Mr. Bullitt is still around when we have lost this war we will impale him on the obelisk of the Concorde."

Admiral Leahy need fear no such resentment. No longer need he allow Marshal Pétain to infer from his conversations that at some future date the United States may become involved in the war with Germany—possibly, even probably, but of course only according to his own personal analysis of the situation—and that this involvement will mean a reversal of the probable outcome of the war. Admiral Leahy no longer need defend himself against the charge of being a British agent, or a Russian agent, or the private legate of the American interventionists: for all the world to know, for all the French to see, and for the Germans to regret, Admiral Leahy is now exactly what his title proclaims him to be—the agent of his country which is at war.

He represents our country in a key strategical position and the Germans, the French collaborationists, and certain excited Americans would love dearly to see him leave it. He stands in the gateway of Europe with his foot there to keep the door from closing, and he represents our determination—no longer verbal—and the physical reality of our presence in the war. That parcel of America which is the Embassy in Vichy—a makeshift Embassy in a makeshift capital—is embedded in French soil, which is the soil of Europe, until our victory shall stand there also. The Ambassador is our presence as he is our voice—a confident, and not a confidential, presence, and an assured voice for all Europe to hear. Not all the voices broadcast day after day from our most powerful posts—with all the typewriters hammering out the scripts—have the authority which is his. The Germans make no mistake about it nor does their irreparably committed friend, Jean Luchaire, who writes in the Paris *Nouveaux Temps* that our Ambassador is Mephistopheles manoeuvering the Pétain Faust.

France and Europe heard the voice of the New Order—backed by action; the voice they now hear from America is backed by action. The debate is now a fair debate. A man has to weigh the facts as he sees them: words mean little when you are starving, sick and defeated. In America it is hard to realize what it means to feel that the odds are hopeless, but until we came in the war they must have seemed hopeless to many in Europe. The surprise is that France and Europe have not collapsed, have not yielded. The amazement is that the Serbs are fighting, the Norwegians in revolt, the Greeks untamed. Hoping against hope Europe has not accepted German rule. Where there seemed no choice but to accept, men throughout Europe have refused to accept. Now, throughout Europe, men knowing that America is in the war await the moment to reject peace in a German system, conclusively.

In most of Europe the debate is carried out in enforced silence and we know the decision of the Serbs, the Greeks and the Norwegians only through brief and clandestine despatches telling of their acts of revolt. But there is one country where the debate is being carried out openly, where there is a government laboring under the agonizing necessity of counseling the people, of taking decisions binding on its people. That government is the captive government of France. It is playing desperately for time. It is striving simply to exist, as France is striving to exist. In its pleading, in its resistance, in the endless and disheartening game it plays with the conqueror, that government will turn more and more for support to the representative of the nation which has turned the scale of probabilities. In the inevitable bargaining, in the search for some element of strength with which to match Hitler's strength, in the quest for hope with which to counteract the despair of submission, men in the French government will turn to Admiral Leahy as they never could turn to General Weygand.

C. G. PAULDING.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

End of Ploughing-Under, I

A panorama of American agriculture and the Department that does its planning.

By **T. Swann Harding**

AS THESE lines are being written, the National Defense Garden Conference, sponsored by Secretary of Agriculture Wickard and Federal Security Agency Administrator McNutt, is being held. On November 5 the Department's garden committee advised the Secretary of Agriculture to place greater emphasis on farm, school and community gardens to help improve nutrition in rural areas. The conference was announced on December 5 and held December 19 and 20, 1941. What does this mean?

We read further that the Surplus Marketing Corporation spent, during the last fiscal year, $84,432,195 for farm surpluses of which $14,333,908 went for surplus vegetables. Even then some vegetables were left in the field because it would not pay to harvest and transport them to market. These purchases in part provided lunches for 4½ million children attending 67,000 schools in the United States. About 9,000 of these schools already had garden projects; 9,500 had canning projects.

Today, however, there is a 1942 "goal" for the establishment of 1,300,000 more farm gardens. There is no demand to plow up city and town backyards, playgrounds, golf links and parks. But it is urged that school and community gardens be started wherever the soil is good, there is expert guidance, and fertilizers, seed and insecticides will not be wasted. That is current news. What is the background?

Agriculture was, in the main, prosperous between 1897 and the outbreak of the Great World War in 1914. It was a relatively stable business based on gradually increasing land values, fair debt and tenure conditions and quite fixed exports of cotton, wheat, pork, tobacco and certain fruits and other commodities. With the outbreak of war increased production was emphasized. However, the Department of Agriculture was not then an over-all planning agency for the industry, and expansion was heedless and disorderly.

As a whole our total area in cultivation was stepped up 13 percent or 40 million acres; the increase in the total value of crops produced was 10½ percent. Crass inflation got under way in 1917, yet farmers did not benefit materially from the high prices paid for farm products. While total income of agriculture rose from about 9 billion dollars in 1916 to 17 billions in 1919, factors were already in existence that would carry it down to 5 billions in 1932.

The average per acre value of farm real estate rose 70 percent between 1913 and 1920, 60 percent between 1916 and 1920. But the gross cash rent paid per acre nearly doubled, taxes and upkeep doubled and the farmer's costs of production—machines, labor, fertilizer, feed—all rose sharply. At last 1919 closed the chapter on rising prices, expansion, farm "progress," and speculation in land. The entire farm economy now had to be reoriented, because the normal development of several generations had been planlessly packed into six brief years.

Post-war handicap

Former Secretary Wallace has stated that the farmer then suffered from seven post-war handicaps. First there were the 40 million additional acres plowed up, many of which should never have been touched by the plow and were later to erode and blow around the country as dust. Second, there was the abrupt change of the United States from debtor to creditor status as a nation, and adjustment to this new status she found it most difficult to make. Third stood the displacement of horses and mules by automobiles, motortrucks, tractors and other farm machines. This factor put the monopolistic agricultural equipment manufacturers into farming without bearing any of the risk.

Fourth came the movement of European nations toward agricultural self-sufficiency, and fifth new farm-product competition from Canada, Australia, New Zealand and the Argentine. Sixth was the increase in our own industrial tariffs which resulted in reciprocal action by other nations and induced them further to shut out our farm products. Finally came the growth of corporate monopoly and corporate price fixing which made farmers take what was offered for their products and pay what was asked for their purchases.

The farmer faced a bleak world. Even in prewar times his net income had been only 60 percent that of non-farm groups. That meant that farmers had produced food and fiber for the nation at a 40 percent discount. While the 7 million farm families comprised 25 percent of our population,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

they received only 11 percent of the national income, and were attempting to rear and educate 31 percent of the nation's school-age children. Farmers contributed half of their children and a great deal of their money to the cities, a sum estimated at $25 billion during the 1920's alone.

Changes in farm technology added greatly to the farmer's difficulty. The number of farm tractors in use doubled between 1930 and 1939, for instance. One tractor can do the work of about 2½ horses. Between 1915 and 1939 motor equipment displaced nearly 10 million horses and mules, turning loose 30 million acres of cropland and 15 million acres of pasture formerly used to feed them. In addition the strains of plants and animals had been improved, hybrid corn had been developed vastly increasing yields, artificial insemination of animals had been perfected, there were gains in efficiency all along the line. More could be produced with less work and effort.

All told more than half a million farm workers were deprived of employment by advancing technology. By 1940 there were over 1½ million unemployed workers dammed up on farms. In 1936 8½ million farm people were trying to live on cash incomes of $2 a week each. Half of all the farm products going to market has come from only about one-tenth of the farms ever since 1929. The number of huge farm factories and of poverty-stricken farms too small to afford a living both increased at the expense of medium-sized farms. Each tractor was capable of pushing from one to five families off the land.

In the cities

What had happened in the cities is well known. While agriculture had been in depression ever since 1920, acute industrial and financial difficulties did not occur the nation over until 1929. It is true certain classes suffered acutely, but a patina of "prosperity" obscured this. Yet studies made around 1936 indicated that 40 to 60 percent of the diets of white families of employed wage earners and clerical workers in cities required improvement to be adequate.

In 1935-36 four million American families had incomes of $500 or less per year, meaning that they could expend only 5 cents per person per meal for food. For purposes of comparison the Army allows 21 cents per soldier per meal, retail prices. Even in families with annual incomes between $1,000 and $1,500, the per person per meal food expenditures ran to only 10 or 12 cents. Families on relief got along on 5 cents per person per meal which the food-stamp plan later stepped up in many cases to 7½ cents.

In his second inaugural address President Roosevelt spoke of one-third the nation being ill-clothed, ill-housed and ill-fed. Findings of the American Institute of Public Opinion, reported December 22, 1940, confirmed this. The survey indicated that diets retarding health were being consumed by 4 families out of 10. Hence about 20 million families thought their diets were inadequate for health. They said that they would buy more meat, vegetables, fruits, dairy products and milk if they could afford to do so.

The same condition exists today according to the survey reported December 6, 1941. For the military economy creates both employment and unemployment although, it is true, as war progresses larger and larger numbers of consumers become direct wards of Government. The use of milk by the average American family is today below the health limit, being but one-half what nutrition scientists say it should be. Furthermore these people know what foods they should eat. High prices and unemployment made them cut down on meat, eggs, butter, milk, vegetables.

Best adapted diet

Nutrition specialists set up an ideal they call the "best adapted diet." That is the scientifically adequate diet based upon the sex, age, work level and general physical development of the individual. If we Americans all had a best adapted diet, we would today eat 15 percent more butter, 20 percent more milk, 35 percent more eggs, 70 percent more tomatoes, citrus fruits and other vitamine-C-rich foods, and 100 percent more leafy green and yellow vegetables.

There roughly you have the picture. You see the adverse conditions farmers have faced. You observe how farm depression has resulted finally in great privations for large classes of consumers. Only one-fourth our people have had really good diets, something like a third have had fair diets, and the rest poor diets. Only about one-half our farm people have had good, while one-fourth each have had fair and poor diets, in part because so many one-crop farmers refused to put in vegetable gardens and raise much of their own food.

Has anything been done to remedy this situation? Industrially—not a great deal; agriculturally, yes. The Department of Agriculture has been completely revolutionized since 1933. It has become a social and economic instrumentality for putting science to work. It has become a board of strategy, an over-all planning agency for the entire agricultural industry working, however, at all times through the democratic process.

Plans have not been made above and shoved down upon those below as is the case with agriculture in nazi Germany. Instead action has been taken only after interested groups have persuaded the Congress to pass remedial legislation. As a result of this legislation, state and federal officials, local workers, scientific and other specialists and plain dirt farmers have planned together and have effected organizations to carry out these plans.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Agencies

As a result of all this the Department has itself a large quota of alphabetical agencies some of which may, for present purposes, be passed over more hurriedly than their importance would warrant. For instance the Soil Conservation Service is charged with the reclamation of millions of acres of partly eroded American soil and the protection of other millions of acres from wind and rain erosion. Other agencies of the Department concern themselves with the conservation and improvement of our water and forest resources. This policy of increasing our natural wealth stems from an economics of abundance.

The Department's aim has been throughout to produce plenty of those commodities for which there was demand and to stimulate demand among relief and low-income groups. The Commodity Credit Corporation makes loans on feed, food and fiber reserves held in storage; these ever-normal granary reserves are released at opportune times. The Farm Credit Administration makes loans to farmers who have collateral, the credit being based on normal, not speculative, values, and farmers' being enjoined to repay debts, build up reserves and avoid speculation.

The Rural Electrification Administration, which attained an age of 6 years on May 11, 1941, has loaned funds for the construction of 354,000 miles of rural power lines which serve 1,168,272 farm families. Repayments are being made sooner than due. As a result of this effort more than one-fourth, instead of only one-tenth as before it began, of our rural families have electric power. Food-processing centers are being sponsored today in rural schools and communities; these aid greatly in increasing wartime food production.

The conservation of human resources, however, is not forgotten. The Farm Security Administration makes what are essentially character loans to farm families lacking collateral. A group medical care plan accompanies the loans and recipients are required to adopt approved scientific principles of home and farm management. Nearly a million indigent farm families have thus been put on their feet and rendered self-supporting at an average cost of $72 each, or one-third to one-fifth what it costs to keep them a year on relief. Over 80 percent of these loans will ultimately be repaid.

This brings us to the Agricultural Adjustment Administration, first of the new units to appear and the one best known to the public—the AAA. This agency is based upon a much misunderstood device. From the very beginning it was designed to *adjust* crop production to requirements, i.e., to increase or to lower the production of specific crops as needed. From the very beginning the agency was never indifferent to the social and economic consequences of its acts.

The AAA arose in the frame of reference of an economics of scarcity. Traditionally, when hit by depression, industry had sought price maintenance by firing workers and decreasing output, which is a form of industrial sabotage pure and simple. The AAA was thus initially patterned on prevailing industrial practices; hence crop and acreage curtailment were combined with price-increasing devices in the effort to give farmers "parity," i.e., a just price as compared with the prices of industrial products.

Production was to be based on normal per capita consumption, plus a normal carry-over (the ever-normal granary idea), plus a due allowance for exports. Later AAA payments were based upon the disposition farmers showed to plant soil-binding crops and to further soil conservation, using scientific means under special instruction and demonstration. However, minimum acreage quotas and soil conservation payments were proportionately larger for small than for large farms, efforts were made to protect tenants and sharecroppers, rehabilitation and relief measures were applied to farms and soil was built up.

Moreover consumers were not forgotten. The ever-normal granary concept was used to protect them from monopolistic exploitation. Later the Surplus Commodities Administration came into existence specifically to deal with farm surpluses and to stimulate consumption among relief and low-income groups.

In short a combined system of relief, surplus disposal, and better nutrition for the underfed was scientifically devised, the food distribution being very largely kept within the framework of the profit system and the traditionally hallowed public school. The diets of participants in these plans were enriched largely in the protective elements—milk, butter, eggs, fruits and vegetables. The cheap-milk and school-lunch programs formed integral parts of the plan.

The Surplus Marketing Administration was created in 1940. It lays down rules, for instance, regarding the purchase of milk by distributors, defines areas covered, classifies the uses of milk, sets the price for each class, defines methods of payment to farmers and audits books. It extends the use of milk by direct purchase and distribution and by the food-stamp plan. When penny milk was made available in New York City, consumption in some schools increased as much as 500 percent, showing the demand existed.

Garden Program

The National Defense Garden Program will aid in the continuation of these services. For we must retain our surplus-disposal devices as a mean of preventing food waste and of controlling production at desirable levels. Because of shifts in technology and in production requirements,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

there will always be a residue of low-income and relief persons to be tided over by food-stamp, cheap-milk and school-lunch plans until they can earn and produce again. Today SMA also purchases foods to be sent to Britain under the Lend-Lease Act, which provides one and a half billion dollars for that purpose. It is gradually becoming primarily an agency for the provision of scientific diets for us and for our allies in war.

In post-war times other problems must be solved which now trouble both farmers and consumers. Food processing and distribution are too highly monopolized, too inefficient and often too elaborate in superfluous services. Farm-marketing facilities are bungling and wasteful; fruit and vegetable terminal markets are worse. Trucker rackets exist. The farmer secures much too small a percentage of the dollar consumers pay for commodities. In normal peace times we have had far too many wholesale and retail outlets and too many middlemen. The entire system must be reorganized fundamentally because it results in a low return for farmers, unnecessarily high prices for consumers and general inefficiency.

As a whole, then, when the Great World War broke out once more in open violence in 1939, our farm problem was far from solved. We still had millions in cities who were ill-clothed and poorly fed, and people on farms who suffered from lack of necessary industrial products. Most of our farm-aid programs—parity payments, crop loans, surplus purchases, export subsidies, and the like—could be defended only as temporary devices for the relief of farm distress. This distress had been occasioned by deep-seated imperfections in our entire economy.

The extension of special privileges to farmers has been recognized as no warrant for the existence of special privileges elsewhere in the system, but as a mere balance of abuses. In the long run the farm problem cannot be solved on the farm alone. It must be solved in the industrial and economic system, the defects of which created the problem. We must learn how to run both our agricultural and our industrial plants at capacity production and employment, solving the functional problem of distributing the resultant goods and commodities. We must develop good human-engineering methods.

Thus alone can we increase to maximum the demand for farm and industrial products, lower the prices farmers pay, protect consumers, guarantee basic necessities to all our people, and increase the national income permanently to a point to maintain such a system. But in May, 1940, we tacitly entered the Great World War again ourselves. In December, 1941, we were treacherously attacked in a quarter we did not anticipate would be struck. What changes have these events made in American agriculture?

National Communism in Germany

Some effects of total war in the total state.

By **Otto Strasser**

HITLER has represented his attack upon Russia as a "crusade against Communism." At the same time he has done better than merely to copy the communist system of government in his own domain: he has given the world a revised and improved version of it.

The new scheme is not confined to a different stand taken in regard to the spiritual life of the nation he is leading, a stand illustrated by the change of methods in his persecution of the Church from propaganda and defamation to open terror and brutality. It applies particularly to the field of economics, in which Hitler has effected a very definite and purposeful transition from a system regimented to the exigencies of war to unconditional war-time communism.

As usual, Hitler's first blow was directed against the weakest point of the position to be attacked. In a totalitarian state, that point is business. If business had imagined that the attack would end with the coining of slogans—such as the one which proclaimed that it was now subjected to a "socialism of efficiency"—business was to have a rude awakening, heralded by the Four Year Plan, and followed by the foundation of the Hermann Goering Works. The latter was a very definite threat, as it meant that the state was establishing for itself a big business concern, one, moreover, which encroached upon the independence of the German heavy industry.

The first acts of uncompensated expropriation of Jewish property took place at about the same time. Before that, the government had used the milder alternative of allowing the business to be managed by an "Aryan trustee," without having recourse to outright confiscation.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Thus, even before the war, the attack upon German business became stronger month by month, especially after the introduction of a general price-control. It had become obvious that, under certain conditions, the rising of prices was unavoidable, even in a closely regimented economic system and with an established wage-ceiling, especially when manufacture depended to any extent upon imported raw materials. Until the beginning of the war, the Price Commissioner attempted to enforce a total price-ceiling by means of decrees to which a never-ending stream of regulations had to be added in order to counter evasions. His greatest problems were the deterioration in quality of goods, while the price remained the same, and the transition from lower to higher quality in an article.

The long and furious battle between the Price Commissioner and German business was waged without decision, until publication of the decree of September 4, 1939, putting the German economic system on a war-time basis. Section 22 provides ominously that "prices for goods of all kinds must be set according to the principles of war-time national economy." The indefinite wording of the passage was like a sword of Damocles hanging over the head of every manufacturer. It has since proved that this signified the transition from price-fixing to profit-elimination. For, on March 5, 1941, the Price Commissioner issued an order to the effect that he was "imposing total war-service upon each and every member of the community."

The content of this decree is sourly described by the *Frankfurter Zeitung* as follows: "In abolishing excess-profits, the income control levels not only the income of the consumer, but also the cash profits of business concerns. . . . Surely it is understandable for many a hard-working businessman to feel that the income control is unjustly cutting his profits; but . . . the requirements of a state at war are decisive as much for the shaping of the conditions of supply and demand in general, as for the success or failure of the individual business concern. Under the circumstances it is only natural for the government (while remembering the laws of economic and psychological expediency) to judge moral issues pertaining to economic life purely from the political point of view. Considering this, it does not seem unjust that the government should now retroactively [!] suspend some laws which it permitted to remain in force in peace-time."

In another part of the editorial, the *Frankfurter Zeitung* admits that the Price Commissioner's right to control production costs was bound to give rise to difficulties, but that German business would have to realize that the government could not grant profits to anyone for the duration of the war. Germany's foremost industrial organ then proceeds to comfort its readers with these words: "This institution cannot possibly be meant to become a permanency, for it cannot be reconciled with the principles of free competition. And surely eventually—though possibly not immediately after the end of the war—competition will once again be permitted to exercise its stimulating and constructive functions."

This labored sentence with its many qualifying phrases shows plainly that even the I. G. Farben paper no longer has much hope that Hitler's war-time communism, once established in Germany, will resurrect German business after the war is over.

Against Labor

If, however, some people should think that the strangling of business by Hitler's war-time communism has in any way improved the position of German labor, they have failed to grasp the nature of this—or any other—communism. Hitler's war-time communism may be flogging German business, but it is belaboring the German worker with scorpions.

The staggering demonstration of this fact comes from an article in the nazi press. It bears the typical war-time title, "The Combing Commission." That phrase has an ominous sound to the ears of every German who went through the last war: in 1917, the Supreme Command, Hindenburg-Ludendorff, ordered a "combing" of all military units in the German interior for every single man who could possibly be sent to the front. The measures of this former "combing commission" were rigorous, its members known to be strict and ruthless, for their reputation with their superiors, as well as any chance of promotion, depended entirely upon their "success," i.e., the quantity of cannon-fodder they could produce.

These military "combing commissions" of unhallowed memory have been reinstated by Hitler in the economic field, their methods being now even more brutal than under Ludendorff.

It is the object of the present "combing commissions" to investigate all industrial concerns in order to determine whether their staffs of workers are too large, whether they use too many skilled laborers, whether it be possible to replace male and adult workers with women and adolescents, whether a lengthening of working-hours, or a stepping up of production, might be attained, for instance, by shortening the lunch-hour, by community meals, transport to the factory, etc.

The ambition of each commission is to squeeze the utmost number of workers out of individual concerns. The workers are then forced (without any chance of protest) to leave their place of work, their domicile and often their country, and are sent to work in one of the new factories in Poland, Slovakia, Yugoslavia or Rumania.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

This is wage-slavery in its most extreme form—and the writer of the article mentioned above is forced to admit that the actual transplanting of workers often leads to great unpleasantness. In many cases, workers and owners take a united stand against the commission.

This is how the nazi paper describes the composition, methods and successes of this slavery commission:

> Since it is likely to have as far-reaching effects on the individual industrial concern as on the vocational development of the individual worker, the withdrawal of labor demands care and differentiation in methods. Many points of view must be taken into account. . . .
>
> In most cases, the commissions consist of representatives of the Labor Offices, of the Ordnance Corps, the economic administration and the Chambers of Industry and Commerce. Occasionally there is a representative of the German Labor Front. The delegate of the Minister of Armament and Munitions usually holds the central position. Smaller establishments are examined by members of the Labor Office only. . . . Many concerns, especially very large ones, are visited by a Reichs-commission. . . . With the aid of this machinery, all establishments have been examined in regard to their labor set-up. Some of them were visited several times, depending on the development of conditions and the actual cause of investigation.
>
> Formerly taken for granted, the rule of maintaining a full complement of workers over a period of lessening activity has now become invalid.
>
> Any attempt on the part of an industrial concern to emphasize a line of production which at the time may be of particular importance, in order to gain a more favorable decision, would be quite useless. The commissions do not consider circumstances superficially. They go into the individual position very thoroughly.
>
> Particular attention is given by the commissions to the question of skilled labor. An industrial concern that uses skilled workers on jobs which could be done by apprentices, or male and female helpers, naturally cannot obtain additional skilled help; on the contrary, it must expect a decrease in staff. Very often the skilled laborer himself prefers to do jobbing, because he earns better money there. That, however, does not constitute an excuse for the foreman or the manager, who must know that any waste of skilled labor is unforgivable.
>
> Wherever working hours have not yet been increased beyond the peace-time level, there are possibilities which must be utilized before any new demands can be satisfied.
>
> No consideration on the part of labor authorities may be expected by concerns that discharge their employees too easily—and not infrequently with mutual understanding—or whose policy fails to bind employees to their place of work [!]. The same applies to establishments whose sick-list is unnecessarily high, owing to the lack of vigorous supervision of the staff and failure to investigate sick-leaves. The commissions will not hesitate to point out that there are in both instances resources of man-power which have not been fully exploited.
>
> The actual withdrawal of those workers who have been described by the commissions as "superfluous" is effected by the Labor Office. Workers who are to be sent abroad must be at immediate disposal and "transplantable."
>
> Thus, workers withdrawn from one factory may sometimes have to be sent to another factory in the same district, which in turn will release a corresponding number of workers to meet the requirements. It may even be necessary to make exchanges over several factories.
>
> Naturally, it will be much easier to get unskilled and female helpers than skilled laborers. And equally naturally each individual case will demand sacrifices on the part of both industrial concerns and workers.

Here, then, Hitler's war-time communism has forced upon the whole German nation an institution which even Ludendorff dared enforce only in the military field. Not only is there in present-day Germany a total obligation to work, but the workers are disposed of like slaves. Profession, place of work, even the country where they are to work, are prescribed by the government, with complete disregard of family ties and, of course, civil liberties in general.

Against the Consumer

There may still be a naïve soul who thinks that at least the large section of economic life referred to as "the consumer" might gain by such an arrangement.

However, Hitler's war-time communism is denied even this justification of the long run; for, aside from the fact that he is usually a worker (and is therefore subjected to the limitations discussed in the two previous sections of this article), the consumer as such is directly affected by other aspects of the new trend.

The latest item on the agenda of Hitler's war-time economy is the introduction of standard clothing.

Despite price-ceilings and profit-elimination, prices have been rising in Germany, especially in textiles. In this line, a *de facto* rise in prices could be attained by using inferior *ersatz* material, thereby lowering the quality of goods while maintaining the actual price level.

Precipitated by this ever-present danger, and by further difficulties with regard to raw materials, a measure has now been adopted by the Minister of Economics and the Price Commissioner which as yet exists not even in Russia. It is the plan to introduce standard clothing, to be forced upon the consumer.

At present, three articles of clothing have been defined "standard wares": trousers and jackets of Koeper, flannel shirts usually worn with these, and smocks for working women.

For these "standard wares" not only is the price set by the government. Materials to be used (including color, cut, etc.), thread, buttons, as well as every bit of labor involved are prescribed. Yarn is given only to a mill which guarantees to manufacture the material at a certain price (or less); the establishment that finishes the material has to do so at a certain price; and the clothing firm that turns out the finished product must sell it at a certain price. Finally, there are set retail profits, so that these "standard wares" may be bought everywhere at the same price and quality, both price and quality having been determined by the government.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

That, however, is only a beginning. Here is a literal quotation from an article in the nazi press, issued as advance publicity for the introduction of "standard wares":

> We have heard that the three articles of clothing hitherto offered as "standard wares" with set prices and set quality constitute only a first step; preparations have already been completed for the extension of standardization to other textile products.
>
> Standardization of prices and quality in the textile industries implies a further expansion of the production policy of the government. It is not the manufacturer who sets the price of a product, but the Price Commissioner. The manufacturer must confine himself to the simple calculation of whether or not he is able to accept the prices set by the government. If he feels he can do so, he will receive the necessary raw materials. If he does not, he will receive none.
>
> The government makes use of its right to standardize prices and to allot raw materials in order to enforce the lowest possible prices for "standard wares" (the number of which is bound to increase), because the government wishes to ensure the lowest possible cost of clothing for the most important group of consumers, especially workers in the armament industries.

The demagogical flavor of that last sentence is supposed to make the bitter pill more palatable to the German people. It is to make them forget that the last little bit of self-determination has been taken from them with the right of the individual to decide what clothes, and of which color and quality, he is going to wear. So far, it is the climax of Hitler's war-time communism—and that in the second year of the war!

Lief Ericsson to 1942

By BONAVENTURE SCHWINN, O.S.B.

IT HAS BEEN just fifty years since John Gilmary Shea published his monumental "History of the Catholic Church in the United States." During the half-century that has elapsed since 1892, no work has appeared that could be compared in comprehensiveness with the four quarto volume of the father of American Catholic church history. Although no comprehensive history has been published since the last decade of the nineteenth century, much excellent research covering certain periods has been done. Monsignor Peter Guilday's great lives of Bishops John Carroll and John England, to mention only his two most important works, which are scientific documentary history at its best, tell the story of the Church in the United States down to 1842. Thomas A. Hughes, S. J., has written a brilliant history of the Jesuits in North America, while Gilbert J. Garraghan, S.J., has published the results of his extensive researches into the history of the Jesuits in the Middle West. Herbert E. Bolton, non-Catholic professor of history at the University of California, has made important contributions to our knowledge of the beginnings of the Church in the Southwest. And Frederick J. Zwierlein has studied the interesting career of Bishop Bernard McQuaid. To the work of these and many other distinguished scholars must be added the countless short papers and special studies published in *Historical Records and Studies, Records* of the American Catholic Historical Society of Philadelphia, and the *Catholic Historical Review.*

For many years there has been need of a work that would tell the story of the Catholic Church in the United States in the light of the information that has gradually been made available by research scholars and at the same time bring the story up to date. Such a work has at last appeared. Theodore Maynard in his "The Story of American Catholicism"* has not only brought the story of the Church in this country up to date, but he has fitted it into America's political history and social background in a book that is without a dull page. The story not only moves forward with dramatic swiftness, it lives.

To produce such a work from archival sources would have been impossible. And it would also have been quite unnecessary, in view of the work already done by scores of research scholars. Mr. Maynard has written a "literary" history. Except for his unusual gift of epitomizing, for compressing an incident into a few pungent sentences and painting a picture with a few deft strokes, he could not have presented, in one handy volume of 694 pages, all the important events in the history of Catholicism in this country during the last 450 years, sketching in necessary background, indicating relationships, criticizing, evaluating men and movements, and, finally, pointing out present tendencies that hold the promise of things to come. That there are omissions goes without saying. The wonder is that he has got so much into his book.

The general reader will think "The Story of American Catholicism" most convincing and as interesting as a novel. And college students and seminarians who use it as a textbook will find it eminently satisfactory. But critics will arise in the East and the West to take Mr. Maynard to task both for what he has left out of his book and what he has put into it. He has, they will say, omitted important dates (in the chapter "The Public Be Damned," for example) that would have greatly helped the reader to form a clearer picture. Although he treats well of the Irish immigration after the Potato Famine, he says nothing about immigration after 1880, when hundreds of thousands of "new" immigrants, Germans, Slavs and Italians, came into the country. Although he explains why the Irish immigrant stayed in the cities, helping unduly to swell the

---

*The Story of American Catholicism. Theodore Maynard. Macmillan. $3.50.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

urban population, he ignores the fact that great numbers of Catholic Germans, Slavs and Italians settled on the land in such states as Minnesota, Wisconsin, Iowa, Nebraska, Oklahoma and Texas, where they built churches and established large Catholic communities and where their descendants are living to this day. And critics will come from the North to disagree with Mr. Maynard's judgment of Lincoln in regard to the Emancipation Proclamation and the weight of the arguments favoring secession, and in the South he will be blamed for his general attitude toward the Civil War.

Some readers will think that Mr. Maynard gives the Irish more credit than is due them. "Upon the whole," he says, "it is incontestable that the guiding hands of the Church in the United States have been Irish. That this is so may be considered providential. The Irish were at once the men most capable and of the race most assimilable by America." Here he states a fact and an opinion. The fact is beyond question. As for the opinion, Mr. Maynard has God and the Holy See on his side. Since the earliest days, when most of the few bishops were French, the Holy See has followed the policy of maintaining a predominantly Irish hierarchy in this country. That God has manifestly and abundantly blessed the American Church under the Irish "domination" is evident from its marvelous growth and prosperity.

Mr. Maynard is very capable of answering his critics for himself. But one answer is, "You can't please everybody—especially not when you are treating of matters that touch religious, racial and sectional prejudices."

"The Story of American Catholicism" is both intensely American and profoundly Catholic. Its Americanism appears in the manner in which the author throughout shows how consonant the American system of government and way of life are with Catholic principles and how well the Church has always fitted into the pattern of American institutions. Concluding his chapter on "The Causes of the Revolution," he says, "The American Catholic was not only able to be an American; he knew that it was he who had the deepest understanding of the American idea."

And the story is profoundly Catholic. Whether it was Leif Ericsson or Christopher Columbus that first discovered America, the discoverer was a Catholic. The missionary endeavors of the early Spanish and French explorers and settlers are emphasized, the acts of the first martyrs related, and the principal reason for the Church's existence, the sanctification of souls, is given the prominence it deserves. The Jesuit martyrs who have been canonized and the Blessed Rose Philippine Duchesne and Blessed Mother Cabrini receive adequate treatment.

From Mr. Maynard's book the reader can learn just how Edward Seymour, Lord of the British Treasury, swore when the colonial Dr. Blair explained to him the need of a seminary for the training of ministers in Virginia, because "Virginians as well as Englishmen have souls to save"; that Chief Justice Roger Brooke Taney, who handed down the Dred Scott decision, would insist on standing in line and taking his turn to enter the confessional, even though many of those ahead of him were Negro slaves; that Stephen A. Douglas died a Catholic a year after he had been defeated for the Presidency by Lincoln; that General William Starke Rosecrans became a Catholic while teaching at West Point and was instrumental in the conversion of his brother Sylvester, who became a bishop at the age of thirty-four; that Terence V. Powderly, Master Workman of the Knights of Labor, was a Catholic but in later life left the Church and joined the Masons; that Bishop John Baptist Miège, S.J., who was appointed bishop in 1850 much against his will, resigned as soon as possible and afterward refused to be known by any title except that of "Father"; that the Austrian Bishop I. F. Baraga wrote Indian dictionaries and grammars and even published his pastoral letters and devotional books in Chippeway; that the famous Father Pierre J. De Smet, S.J., was a short man and weighed 250 pounds and liked to joke about his size; that when an Englishman asked Orestes A. Brownson who were the three most profound men in America, he named himself as one of the three; and in reply to the question whether he had found the Catholic Church a bed of roses, he answered, "A bed of spikes, sir, a bed of spikes!"; that Theodore Roosevelt did his best to get Archbishop Ireland created a cardinal in 1905; and that when Dorothy Day's bills become too numerous, she puts them under a statue of Saint Joseph, and the Patron of the Houses of Hospitality provides.

It may be objected that such *obiter dicta* are not important. Perhaps not. But they add human interest and give the story life and reality, as do also such cameo-like pictures as the description of Father Daniel E. Hudson, C.S.C., for more than fifty years editor of *The Ave Maria,* as "a Kentucky colonel in porcelain," and such characterizations as this of Bishop McQuaid: "the old lion, however ferocious he could be in attack, and however unscrupulous his methods sometimes were, had a generous spirit. He was in the habit of growling about Roman interference, but when Rome spoke nobody more whole-heartedly accepted its decisions."

Besides an encyclopedic knowledge of his subject, Mr. Maynard exhibits frequent flashes of extraordinary insight. For example, in speaking of education, he mentions that even today wealthy

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Catholics have not yet come to realize the necessity of educational endowments. And on educational policy he says, "Now we see in the reaction led by Robert Maynard Hutchins of Chicago University and others an educational program not unlike the one that would have been followed by our Catholic colleges had they held fast to their original ideas."

Mr. Maynard's humor enlivens many pages of his story. Sometimes his humor takes the form of comment, as when speaking of the deplorable divorce that exists between education and life, he observes that "the majority leave college with a pious determination never to read a solid book again if they can help it; which, to do them justice, they commonly contrive to carry out." But oftener his humor is in the form of anecdotes. He relates how Louise Imogene Guiney's "first essays and poems were hailed by her native Boston, the aged Oliver Wendell Holmes adding his approval. Perhaps, however, he was afraid to do otherwise, for when Miss Guiney took two of her St. Bernard dogs into Holmes's study, the terrified Autocrat retreated behind his library table with an imploring 'Nice doggies! Good doggies!'". In describing one of Brownson's most conspicuous traits he says that "when Louis Veuillot wrote from France to say that, though he disagreed with him, he admired him, Brownson wrote back that, though he admired Veuillot, he disagreed with him. He spent his whole life disagreeing with people. Even with Catholics he usually managed to disagree except on questions that were *de fide*."

The last two chapters are very different from those that precede. In Chapter Twenty-eight Mr. Maynard gives a critical evaluation of the cultural contributions of American Catholics in literature, painting, architecture, music, the drama, the physical and biological sciences, history, theology and philosophy. Naturally, the achievements in these many fields vary greatly. To Orestes A. Brownson, in spite of his defects and limitations, Mr. Maynard accords the distinction of being the most original thinker American Catholicism has produced.

The story of American Catholicism is brought entirely up to date with a brief discussion of the most important movements that are going on in the Church in America today. Mr. Maynard mentions three: Catholic charities, which are performing the spiritual and corporal works of mercy, and he singles out Mother Alphonsa (Rose Hawthorne Lathrop), Mary Merrick and Dorothy Day for special mention; the movement for social justice, to which Monsignor John A. Ryan has contributed so much; and the liturgical movement, which he considers "the most remarkable of all the Catholic developments of our time." Corporal charity and social justice, he thinks, find their best source of spiritual inspiration in the liturgical movement, because they derive their chief value and dignity from the life of the spirit, which, in turn, finds its richest nourishment in the Church's Liturgy.

And thus the story is brought to the close of the period which ended with America's entrance into the Second World War, but is not finished. "The end is not yet: only the foundations have been laid. The lofty superstructure, visioned and in part designed, belongs to the future."

Views & Reviews

BY MICHAEL WILLIAMS

TWO of the most interesting and most vitally important articles to appear for some time in any periodical known to this writer were those published in THE COMMONWEAL of January 2 dealing with English Catholics; more particularly, with the English Catholic press. Don Luigi Sturzo's contribution, "People and Freedom," it is true, also dealt with a political movement on behalf of Christian democracy, initiated and directed by Catholics, though aided by non-Catholics, yet even so the problems of journalism entered so inseparably into the consideration of the political movement described that, in effect, his article both supplemented and enlarged the scope of the article by Mr. Michael de la Bedoyere which dealt exclusively with the (English) Catholic press in wartime. Valuable as both the articles are as descriptions and expositions of the activities of the English Catholics in the special fields surveyed, what both writers so authoritatively discuss are now precisely the same subjects; are, indeed, generally speaking, identical with the same problems that American Catholics must deal with; hence, they should, and I believe they will, be read and re-read, even studied most earnestly, on this side of our embattled world.

Like American Catholics, our English brethren in the Faith form a minority, served by a press that, again as is the case with us, is read only by a small minority even of Catholic readers. In England, Mr. de la Bedoyere testifies, the Catholic press "cannot be said to affect public opinion or even to get a fair share of hearing, but I think that in wartime it is coming to affect more and more a growing nucleus, by no means exclusively Catholic or even Christian, of men and women who are beginning to realize that the hope of the world cannot lie in the *vox populi* or the cash of the great industrialists or the game of the politicians or the latest dicta of the popular scientists and philosophers or in the armed might of the great nations, whether conservative or revolutionary, but in those who, without fear or bigotry, are trying to apply to contemporary events the unchanging moral principles founded in the religion of Christ." But Mr. de la Bedoyere at once frankly admits that he is not very hopeful of this hope. "The light of Christianity," he admits, "today is deeply obscured, and I fear that it will be a long time before the many clouds begin to disperse." But "'suffi-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

cient for the day is the evil thereof,' and while we must seek to estimate and guard against the coming dangers, our first job is surely to do our Christian best to help ward off that which is a danger not to us alone but to the very seeds of reconstruction."

I wonder if there is any evidence to show whether here in the United States our Catholic press is gaining or losing the respect and confidence both of Catholic readers and of those readers not Catholic but willing to give consideration to what Catholicism, as reflected in its press, has to tell them. In England, as both Mr. de la Bedoyere and Don Sturzo affirm, the latter most strongly, at least certain Catholic journals, and those among the most influential, and the ones most likely to be quoted from or discussed in secular journals, had come, as war broke upon the English, to be regarded as tinged, to say the least, with sympathy for and even with support of some of the fascist régimes in Europe. I think that Mr. de la Bedoyere gives a reasonable explanation of how this impression was created. Criticizing, as it was their clear duty to do, many of the very apparent weaknesses and even the evils that had sprung up in democratic societies because of their departure from, or repudiation of, some of the fundamental moral principles of Christianity, Catholic publicists did indeed "examine with interest and sympathy the reconstructive elements in the reaction to that decadence in countries whose régimes varied from nazism through fascism and Spanish nationalism to Salazar's re-making of Portugal." Don Sturzo's opinion on this point seems to be that such Catholic publicists deceived themselves. However this may be, as Mr. de la Bedoyere frankly confesses, "the Catholic press as a whole [in England] can now be accused with some justice of having backed the wrong horse." Very much the same situation has existed in the United States. Our press has now the same problem to deal with that faces the Catholic press in England. Catholic devotion to freedom, to patriotism, to the principles announced by the free governments and firmly grounded upon the peace principles laid down by the Pope is permanent, unshakable. Our press must and will give expression to that devotion.

The Stage & Screen

Clash by Night

HOLLYWOOD has been generally blamed for Clifford Odets's failure to live up to the promise of "Awake and Sing" and "Waiting for Lefty." But the faults of "Clash by Night" aren't the faults of Hollywood; indeed, Mr. Odets might to advantage have borrowed more liberally from the movies' adroitness for plot mechanics and episodic elaboration, particularly in his static second act. No: "Clash by Night" suffers principally from a lack of direction arising from the want of any adequate frame of reference.

Odets's frame of reference in 1935 was the class struggle. What has lasted over into 1942 is principally

B. ALTMAN & CO.

Meadowbrook* gabardines

. . . this thoroughbred suit, abounding in fit, tailoring and beauty. To be seen now in the 1942 town-and-resort edition of these famous Altman exclusives, Natural, beige, blue or brown. 12 to 20. 59.95

Meadowbrook* shop, third floor

*trademark

Fifth Avenue at 34th Street Telephone MU. 9-7000
Also at our East Orange and White Plains Shops

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

a humanitarian intuition of the individual's private separation, which is valid background for pathos but not for tragedy. Here is a triangle of the bored wife, the insentient husband and the handsome lodger: surely no novelty in the theater and demanding the justification of a fresh approach. Or at least a special quality of perception and analysis. It is disappointing to report that Odets has given it neither. Nor has he given the familiar situation stature by relating it to any moral or social standard. Infidelity is meaningless outside the moral arena; tragedy requires a villain, whether it be a person or a society. Odets no longer indiscriminately blames Society, and doesn't recognize the Devil. He succeeds in interesting us in his characters' temperaments, but never in their tragedy.

Before he lets us down, however, Odets gives us three scenes out of his top drawer. Here he shows himself again a master of vivid colloquial dialogue—occasionally over-stylized so that single phrases stand out in epigrammatic isolation, but the stylization is in general a benefit; "lifelike" dialogue is a far more subtle affair than mere stenographic naturalism. The slow-witted, warm-hearted Polack husband (Lee Cobb) is a rich, engaging figure when he's in a good mood; misfortune, however, reduces him to an inarticulate subhumanity that occasionally verges dangerously upon the ludicrous. Tallulah Bankhead, as the wife, gives out her usual sultry glamor, although she never quite escapes the impression of slumming. The best performance is Joseph Schildkraut's as the lover: defensive cynicism shielding a sense of psychic defeat—a character recalling Moe Axelrod in "Awake and Sing," but less stock, more convoluted. Boris Aronson captures in his Staten Island cottage-porch and waterside beer-pavilion the Chekhovian moods of Odets at his lyric best; and his movie-projection room is a murder setting that Alfred Hitchcock will envy. *(At the Belasco.)*

The First Crocus

ALTHOUGH most of the characters in "The First Crocus" have considerable trouble with their j's, they are securely rooted in U. S. soil. By the end of Arnold Sundgaard's play, you enjoy a warm personal acquaintance with the Norwegian settlement of Albion, Minnesota, and particularly with the Jorislund family. Mother is inclined toward bossiness; Father could do with a firmer spine; Henrik's vocabulary competes with Samuel Goldwyn's; Avis has a man-hunting gleam in her eye; and Milton, the youngest, makes sure he will win the prize for finding the season's first crocus by staking it out in advance with a red-handled screwdriver. But you understand them all too well to blame them.

The play is frankly a genre piece, revolving about nothing more epochal than the crocus swindle, ten dollars and fifty cents borrowed from the school cashbox and the peregrinations of a worn overcoat. But so is "Brooklyn, U.S.A." a genre piece. The difference between the two plays is that one occupies itself with people's actions, while the other occupies itself with their hearts. Albion will never compete with Brooklyn for front-page headlines, but you should find it a relaxing pleasure to spend a few hours there.

The acting and production are uniformly excellent. Herbert Nelson and Hugo Haas are especially ingratiating as Father Jorislund and a Swedish neighbor, and Martha Hedman's Mother is fully rounded. As this goes to press, I learn that "The First Crocus" wasn't robust enough to last out its first week. That's a pity; it was a tenderly and honestly written play which a well balanced season should have found place for.

DAVID BURNHAM.

Inventory

WHEN future histories of cinema are written, 1941 will undoubtedly stand out for "Citizen Kane." But because other good pictures were made during the year and because readers of any movie column have a right to know their reviewer's preferences so that they may have a standard by which to judge his reviews, I herewith name the other nine that are my choice for 1941's ten best. This list (not in order of preference, except of course for "Citizen Kane" which is unqualifiedly first) is entirely personal and is open to comment: "How Green Was My Valley," "The Stars Look Down," "Here Comes Mr. Jordan," "All That Money Can Buy," "The Little Foxes," "Dumbo," "Sergeant York," "The Philadelphia Story," "Tom, Dick and Harry." So, *pax vobiscum,* and may 1942 bring us as good or even better a crop.

The new year starts out with a couple of strictly adult comedies. Both are from the stage, and although they went through a certain amount of cleaning up in their transcription to the screen they still retain some of their bedroomy wisecracks and situations. For a musical comedy, *"Louisiana Purchase"* is surprisingly faithful to its original. It even opens with the same singing introduction, which overemphasizes that this snappy political satire is based on fiction and takes place in the mythical state of Louisiana. Then comes US Senator Oliver P. Loganberry to expose the graft among the bigwigs of New Orleans. Loganberry does a pretty good job of investigating, much to the discomfiture of the crooked Southerners, until they gang up on him and get him in a compromising situation. In spite of Director Irving Cummings's efforts to keep things moving at a fast pace, the show slows up at times and gets rather stagey. However there's always Bob Hope who has some good lines to put over in his slyest manner. Lovely Zorina dances and looks stunning in plain or fancy clothes. Bright-eyed Irene Bordoni helps the plot along in her vivacious manner. An unusually beautiful chorus in DuBois costumes and gay technicolor and the Irving Berlin songs keep this film from getting dull. But its chief asset is Victor Moore. Perhaps even better than when he created the Loganberry part on the stage, Moore is so cute as the befuddled, astute, coy, conservative, whimsical, funny, dry Yankee that he is practically irresistible. Moore's manner of delivery, his walk, lovable kindness and charming personality would add distinction to any film in which he appeared. We welcome him back to Hollywood.

Those who saw *"The Man Who Came to Dinner"* on the stage will find that the mechanics of the play creak

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

even more loudly in the motion picture version. While movie goers won't believe that even Alexander Woollcott (said to be the inspiration for the Sheridan Whiteside rôle) could be so boorish and that everyone around him could be so taken in, they will be treated to practically the same flow of wit and madness that kept playgoers laughing so heartily. But this George S. Kaufman-Moss Hart play, made into a screenplay by Julius and Philip Epstein, shouldn't be examined too analytically. It must be accepted, if at all, as a series of funny wisecracks and cleverly chosen metaphors. It is well acted and moves along swiftly under William Keighley's direction. Once again Monty Woolley does an expert portrayal of the disagreeable "first man of American letters," who slips and breaks his hip in "Mesaline," Ohio, and manages to keep his audience in stitches as he hurls insults and calls more fancy names than have ever before been used in a movie. Some from the stage are genteelly omitted, but the script is not genteel. Bette Davis plays her best comedy rôle as his secretary. "Simpering Sappho with cow eyes" he names her; and when she falls in love with the young reporter (played by Richard Travis with refreshing enthusiasm), Whiteside tries to break up the romance by calling in an actress who usually gets what she wants. Ann Sheridan lays it on thick in this rôle, but a play that consists mainly of epigrams being tossed around needs a little exaggeration in the acting. Reginald Gardiner gets quite thespian as the Noel Cowardish actor too. Because Jimmie Durante enters late in the picture, he has to work overtime with his insane patter to get laughs after everyone else in the cast has been bringing down the house. The story won't keep you awake nights; but the smart-alecky lines will keep you wide awake in the theater, or at least everyone else's laughter will. And when you're not hating the selfish egomaniac who came to eat, you'll be listening intently for his fresh insults.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

Books of the Week

What's Wrong Down South

Deep South. Allison Davis, Burleigh B. Gardner, Mary R. Gardner. Chicago. $4.50.

DR. JOHN DOLLARD of the Institute of Human Relations of Yale University will probably have to give account in the hereafter for his crime of "class distribution." Mr. Allison Davis and the rest of the staff who split Negroes into a series of patterns as complex as the Theory of Complex Variables will have to give account for all this, too. And the average man of good will who wants to see something done about the South will be as confused after reading this book as he was the day before he picked it up.

Are you good on graphs? Do you read charts well? How is your college Marxism? You must be an old hand on the job to interpret these things, but even with this, you will have doubts about the Dollard method of explaining human poverty, ignorance, crime and general distress. I prefer Archbishop Lucey's remarks at the twentieth annual meeting of the National Conference of Catholic Charities. Said he, in the course of a stirring address: "In this land of the free, particularly in our beloved South, we discriminate against the Negro and the Latin American. The colored man may be a good citizen and a saintly Christian, but we shun him in the hospital, in the streetcar, in the railroad train and the theater. He may be our servant but not our equal, in spite of the fact that Almighty God made him to His own image and likeness. We prefer the man whose skin is white even if his heart and soul be black. What a mockery of divine mercy to think that the Son of God died only for the white man."

I am sure that Allison Davis and the Gardners (I assume a man-and-wife or sister-and-brother relationship) were trying in 558 pages to get at the roots of the evil, but I believe Archbishop Lucey did a better job in fewer words. Still, there is much that is good here, as there is something good in most social treatments. (I am working for a good propaganda, however, now as before.) Because I am convinced that Negroes are being defended by methods that do harm, I am daring a few suggestions.

Take, for example, the use of Negro dialect, rather, the Southern dialect. What does it matter that Southerners drop the final consonant? The French did that for a few centuries and made a language. Hence, it is a waste of white paper and social effort to record that: "[a farmer] bought it for forty acres. That's what Mr. Holman tol' me an' that's whut [!] my contrack [!] calls for. [*Why not be consistent and write 'fer'?*] But ef [!] you know enything [!!!] . . ." It is a waste of the human mind to sit up all night making mental notes on how Southern poor whites or poor blacks said something, rather than working on what could be done as a way out of what they are facing.

STARTS SATURDAY, JANUARY 10th

"There are hardly proper adjectives to express properly the awe-inspiring beauty of this film . . . excellently photographed and recorded . . . should be seen by all!"

—*The New World* (Chicago)

SERVITE FATHERS Present
NEW THRILLING DRAMATIC
The ETERNAL GIFT
10-REEL SOUND MOVIE
of Catholic Solemn Mass
PRODUCED UNDER SUPERVISION OF PERPETUAL NOVENA IN HONOR OF OUR SORROWFUL MOTHER
Father J. R. Keane, O. S. M.
Celebrant of the Mass
Rt. Rev. Msgr. F. J. Sheen, Narrator

SQUIRE THEATRE
8th Ave. & 44th St.
CO. 5-9632 (Cont. Daily)

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

There is much worth reading, I say, but there is too much to be done in too short a time to have to read through mathematics, sociology and plane geometry—with snatches of Gogol, Tchekov, Dostoyevsky, Boccaccio and, as I said, Karl Marx at one sitting. We have coordinated to the point of collapse all the learning that we have got in four years of college and three or four of graduate work. And when we write our books, we feel that the scholarship will suffer unless we shoot the works. We have appointed our coordinating committees with an eye on political control of social forces, and we have taken man apart and pasted his insides all over a chart that only a statistical expert can understand. And when we finish, well . . .!

When we finish, we have just one more book telling us: (1) The South was a feudal state, not much ahead of Montenegro, at the outbreak of the Civil War; (2) the armies of the North freed the slaves and left them to rot on top of the earth with an educational system that made intellectuals out of most of us and practical people out of a few of us; (3) the young white men went into the Army, the Navy, the Department of State; (4) the young Negroes taught school to the breaking point, then went North, went to the Left, went despondent, went into WPA, NYA, etc., many longing to be Parisians and artists.

This book, like most of its type, tells us not what to do but how badly we have done it; not where we are going, but where we have been. We read once more that the American feudal areas are opposed to trade unions. If there are trade unions, they are ruled by white men who are afraid of black competition, for, under the system that prevails, there are not jobs enough to go around.

On the other hand, we must keep pounding on our modern sociologists to realize that the destruction of the Negro church leaves the Southern blacks without defense and stimulation. As poorly trained and as immoral as many of our church leaders have been, the Negro church finds a poor substitute in the Elks, communists, college fraternities. And of the three, I would select the Elks.

What can Catholics do? In the South, Catholics can build trade schools, teach character and saw wood. Catholics can bring into the South technicians to teach white and black alike, perhaps—in deference to the *mores* which the authors of this book describe accurately—in separate schools. But, while teaching a man how to deal with Mother Earth intelligently, how to raise his food, save his soil, etc., he can also be taught the goodness of all mankind. In the industrial towns like Birmingham, Catholics must teach boys the kind of arithmetic they must know for employment in an industrial civilization. Girls must be taught that a good meal cooked at home will prevent many a husband from going astray. In short, a set of Catholic Booker T. Washingtons, old style; not the present-day Tuskegee.

What of higher learning? It is not necessary to argue that Catholics should avoid the stupidity of the leaders of Negro education, forty years ago. There are very few medical doctors in the black belt, few nurses, too few *prepared* school teachers. Most of the grocery stores in black Birmingham are being run by Italian-Americans; all the grocery stores in black Augusta, Georgia, by Chinese-Americans. The depression shattered Negro building trades the country over. And so on.

What is the book all about, you ask? Well, this book tries to make human problems so easy that chart 62, line 4, diagonal 18 will make it possible to read:

> *Negro* prostitute, ***white*** procurer: result of crime 4-a, oppression 478; caste, class and local government 12-f. Procurer different from all other procurers because of race differential 45-gh. Referred to social analysis 680 for further discussion and pigeon-holing.

That's what the book is all about. GEORGE STREATOR.

CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL PROBLEMS

My India, My America. Krishnalal Shridharani. Duell. $3.75.

THIS book rather obviously owes its inception to the great success that attended Lin Yutang's interpretation of China in "My Country and My People." Dr. Shridharani, a young Americanized Hindu, attempts to do the same thing for India, and has managed to produce a highly interesting and informative book. Its defects—which might be noticed at once, before I pass to its merits—are due partly to the fact that this Indian mind, though acute enough, lacks the charm and distinction of Dr. Lin's, and partly to the author's having attempted to crowd into a single volume what should have been dealt with in two. The first part, labelled "Personal," is unsatisfactory, scratching rather than penetrating the surface, and dealing mainly with such incidental matters as Indian fortune-tellers in America and the American week-end. It may be amusing to be told, "All through the weekend, Americans seem to overwork every muscle in their bodies in a relentless effort to relax. They make themselves miserable having a good time." But while such little minnows are being scooped up, larger and brighter fish are allowed to escape. So also with "Part Two: Social." It makes a number of good points, but the hundred and fifty pages alloted to it hardly do more than correct some of Katherine Mayo's overstatements—often either with overstatements in the opposite direction or understatements. In any event Miss Mayo is by now pretty generally discredited.

The really valuable parts of the book are those headed "National" and "Political." Krishnalal Shridharani knew most of the important figures in Indian life intimately, having been at Sir Rabindranath Tagore's school and having gone to prison with Gandhi. To their portraits he adds those of "the beloved giant Pathan chieftain of the North—Kahn Abdul Gaffar Kahn," Jawaharlal Nehru, the aristocratic socialist, as well as those many remarkable men and women who stretch from Gandhi, their center, to Subhash Chandra Bose on the left and to Vallabhbhai Patel on the right. About them all he is objective and impartial. All of them, whatever their other differences, are united in the service of India.

About the British he is equally objective. Protest though he does against imperial exploitation, he admits that the service and self-sacrifice of Indian leaders has been helped by the example usually set by the British administrators, "sweating their lives away for the Empire ideal." And he adds, "We have no quarrel with the British people; in fact, the good feeling that prevails between the two peoples seems almost miraculous in these days of international blood feuds." For this reason, if for no other, there is good reason to believe that what he candidly admits to be one of the most difficult problems in the world will yet be amicably and justly settled. But when he writes, "I am pretty sure that the British themselves would rather have an independent India than a Dominion of India which would yield no profit and yet would have to be protected," I fear that he loses touch with

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

political realities. India will unquestionably become—and probably before long—one of the Dominions. It would be neither to her advantage nor to England's that she pass completely out of the British Commonwealth of Nations.

THEODORE MAYNARD.

CRITICISM

When Painting Was in Glory. Padraic Gregory. Bruce. $3.75.

ANOTHER book which extols the glories of the past and which repeats the old wail: "How wonderful was the past and how very mediocre is the present—to say nothing of the future!" The author displays vast erudition on questions with which any student of painting, sculpture and architecture is fairly well acquainted. In the first two chapters, the "Relation of Religion and Nationality to Art" and "The Rise and Fall of Christian Art," Mr. Gregory gives vent to his opposition to a living tradition in art and would have us eternally "look backward." This attitude is becoming increasingly tiresome and dull and only serves to embalm art, and particularly art in the service of the Church, in the shroud of despair and discouragement.

And the author's comparisons are not fair, to say the least. When he hints that a proper appreciation of Gothic architecture depends somewhat on "a knowledge of the history of monasticism, of the crusades, of feudalism, of the founding of the mendicant orders, of the rise of the guilds, and of Thomistic philosophy," he sneeringly asks whether an appreciation of modern (we should rather call it "contemporary") architecture requires that we be acquainted with "futuristic music, cubist paintings, free verse, the glorification of the straight line in building, and pornographic novels?" . . . And to clinch the matter he adds that "Modern architecture is but the natural development or 'evolution' of Renaissance architecture at its worst." There you have it. Take it or leave it. It seems to me that it is better to forget all about Mr. Gregory's opinions in the matter and allow him to continue his complacent meanderings among the glories of past ages, on condition, of course, that he will allow some of us to believe that much of valid contemporary work is done by those who have a firm grasp of tradition and who may also be aware of Thomistic philosophy, the mendicant orders, the guilds, etc. As a matter of fact this reviewer honestly believes that the true modernist *is* the true traditionalist. Nor is it true to say that "The exponents of Modern art are, verily, the lineal descendants of sires who sat at the feet of Rousseau, and they have inherited his venomous hatred for tradition." Rubbish!

There is little else to remark about this book except to attempt to match the author's textbook erudition by pointing out that Durandus should be read with a grain of salt and that Maritain's "Art and Scholasticism" should have been included in the bibliography.

MAURICE LAVANOUX.

FICTION

Windswept. Mary Ellen Chase. Macmillan. $2.75.

TO READ "Windswept" is to be transported to the coast of Maine and with the Marstons through three generations to savor with almost aching awareness of its beauty the sea beating the headlands, the headlands sweet with blueberries in the sun, the sun or fog wrapping round the great stone house where flows so deep and rich a life that the reader will return to it in memory for the peace and strength that it holds. The novel is, however, concerned first and foremost with ideas. Mary Ellen Chase is profoundly convinced of certain things: that the good life is close to the soil, that "of all good things to which man may be the fortunate heir upon this earth . . . none is better than to help frame the walls and the roof of his own dwelling place," that "it is a great grief when there's no grief worth grieving for," that "one never truly loves another until he has been made to suffer by that other," that our country received more from its sturdy emigrants than it gave to them, that we have a profound responsibility to Europe in the present crisis. Miss Chase is a born essayist; her observations have been made in the spirit of Thoreau and Carlyle. The astonishing thing about her book, however, is that she was able to create persons, full-limbed with gusty life, to demonstrate all she wished to say. Her imagination has kept pace with her insight. Here a mature art surpasses the promises of "Mary Peters" and "Silas Crockett."

Not all the Marstons will stick irrevocably in one's memory. But Mrs. Haskell will. She is the apotheosis of all the homespun New England virtues Miss Chase has repeatedly celebrated in her books. So impressive is her passion for order and cleanliness that the reader is ready to adopt her into his vocabulary as did the young Marstons who always thought that to finish what was set before them was to *haskell* it. As memorable as the nuns in Kate O'Brien's "Land of Spices" is the charming humanist, Mother Radegund, conspicuously more intelligent than holy. Miss Chase knows her convents. Everything from the painstaking, unoriginal handwriting of sisters to the pros and cons of traveling with clergy-fare books has been accurately observed.

SISTER MARIELLA, O.S.B.

A Leaf in the Storm. Lin Yutang. Day. $2.50.

IN BETWEEN lectures on anthropology and the unique nobility of the Chinese nation, journalistic war bulletins on the dates of battles and strategic retreats and realistic but crude propaganda against Japanese invasion tactics, it is possible to find here the shadow of a love story. Because a triangle is the geometrical form best known to modern story tellers, the story takes this shape. In one angle sits the emotionless Poya, who plays with a rationalistic approach to love, life and death, who is described as loving order, but whose career is intensely disorderly. In another is the girl Tanni, a "victim of circumstances" as dabblers in morality would call her, who sheds the skin of her wretched past to become "bright and clean" by doing war relief work. Finally there is the middle-aged Lao Peng, a cloudy philosopher who mouths Buddhistic aphorisms, and holds to the contented belief that right and wrong are whatever you wish to make them. In spite of his variance with Western truth, Peng is worth-while in his actions: he lives charity, he is genuinely the patriot, he serves as an intelligent counsellor, he effaces himself utterly in situations where great strength of character is required. For him alone the story is, perhaps, worth reading.

In spite of every cliché in the manual of melodrama, even to the use of a "Greater love no man hath" tombstone, there are interesting incidental sketches of the power of communism in North China, of the sacrosanct vanity of English imperial officials, of the human brotherhood of refugees, of the growth of a magnificent guerilla army—"for who has a home any more," of the reaction of

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

unprotected civilians during the bombing of an "open" city. The Oriental outlook on life, however, remains as foreign to the reader as the all too frequent smattering of Chinese phrases, and the hymn of hate which sounds as a continual refrain is too discordant for fiction or for criticism.

JAMES EDWARD TOBIN.

RELIGION

Whom Do You Say—? J. P. Arendzen. Sheed and Ward. $1.00; paper bound, $.75.

FROM the day that I read "The Keys of the Kingdom" I have had a holy fear of "that bumptious security which springs from dogma rather than from faith." Not that I was never troubled by this fear before, but the experiences of Father Francis Chisholm, as I followed them, so aggravated it as to make it almost a major factor in the direction of my speculative thinking. It is a salutary thing—this fear—to say the least, and the one thing above many others that makes me value highly J. P. Arendzen's little book, "Whom Do You Say—?"

At no time in his discussion of the doctrine of the Incarnation does the author lose sight of the basic fact that there is here a mystery. The Incarnation must be, in the end, an object of faith. That God the Son, second person of the Blessed Trinity, became Man; that there were and still are in Christ two natures, one divine and the other human; that these two natures, however complete in themselves, are nevertheless held by the one divine person of the Son of God; all this, in final analysis, is a mystery of which, as in all mysteries, one part is seen and the other is unseen.

It is easy enough to see or understand the two natures in Christ when taken separately, and it is just as easy to see that there must be in Him only one divine Person, but that these two natures should co-exist and co-function in His one divine Person can be neither seen nor understood. There is something here, in other words, that is beyond reason, though not contrary to reason. It is this point which the author constantly stresses, and while he invites the reader to strain his intelligence toward the apprehension of this great mystery of the Incarnation, he never fails to remind him after each effort that he must make an act of faith. And far from irritating the reader or giving him a sense of futility, this final admonition makes him appreciate the greatness of the gift of faith and realize that herein, after all, lies the basis for the really radical distinction between the Catholic of today and his numerous non-Catholic friends. They have long since ceased to believe in the divinity of Christ, because they have ceased to accept on faith the mystery of the Incarnation.

The little book is very readable. The author, in resisting temptations to raise the discussion above the level of the lay reader onto the plane of the purely academic, has succeeded admirably. As the first of Sheed and Ward's "Masterpieces of the Month Series," it is extremely well chosen and should presage many good things.

WALTER LE BEAU.

WAR

God is my Fuehrer. Martin Niemoeller. Alliance. $2.75.

THE TRANSLATION of Pastor Niemoeller's last twenty-eight sermons published under the title "God is my Fuehrer" is doubtless a book that will be welcomed by many. When one considers that Pastor Niemoeller was well aware of the fact that he was very closely watched during these sermons, one cannot help admiring his undaunted courage in expressing in the most uncompromising terms what he believes to be right and true, well knowing what the consequences might be. It would be unreasonable to look in these sermons for an objective, dogmatic edifice that would satisfy the adherents of all creeds. His background and inherited prejudices are not absent, but he constantly rises far above them. Even when he preaches on Luther and makes what to many would seem a not altogether justifiable criticism of the Catholic Church in pre-Reformation times, it is not really Luther nor his adversaries who are of importance to Pastor Niemoeller. Also here he is led to the feet of his crucified Saviour, and it is in the consciousness of being His apostle that he encourages his congregation by word and deed. Persecution is to Pastor Niemoeller a divine visitation for which the Christian must be prepared in accordance with the words of the Gospel. Pastor Niemoeller rightly deserves the universal esteem in which he is held, and his words as expressed in these sermons have been confirmed by his actions. His sermons are not learned theological discourses, but of a simple evangelical character, and if they are eloquent, it is an eloquence that is born of the concrete circumstances as he sees them. The translator deserves credit for the way in which she has solved her difficult task. Pastor Niemoeller would probably be the last person to suggest that these sermons ought to be found in every Christian home, yet there is no doubt that they will be a source of inspiration and comfort to anyone who reads them.

ANSGAR NELSON, O.S.B.

France Speaking. Robert de Saint Jean. Dutton. $2.50.

NOW that America has entered the war and the Japanese conflict is on, it may seem quite remote to speak of a book dealing with what happened in France in 1939-40. Besides, everbody, including myself, is extremely tired of the countless explanations which seem to have sprung like a fever over everyone, French *and* foreign, who has ever spent a few years in that country. One begins to wonder why France went to the dogs, as most of the hind-sighters put it, if there were so many clever people who knew what was going to happen. So, at last, when a book comes out in which the author does not perform Pilate's act, it should be advertised from the house-tops. Such was "France My Country," of Maritain, such is, along a different line, Robert de Saint Jean's book, "France Speaking."

It is too bad that the title in English had to have the blazing ring of a radio announcement. "Democracy, Butter and Cannons," which was the French title, was in keeping with the general tone of the book, which is one of an attentive, very much aware, but unassuming observer. Robert de Saint Jean kept a diary from October 9, 1939 to June 17, 1940. It is the diary of a level-headed man whose subtle intelligence and clear judgment made it possible to meet the successive situations without prejudice and with an acuteness of outlook rarely found anywhere, in any country.

In de Saint Jean's book "how it all happened" remains extremely simple. The tragedy moves on, *sotto voce*. The general subduedness of tone makes it more potent. But this quiet holding of the reins of the author's language, of his reason, of his whole self under what one knows to

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

have been a maddening strain, is one of the most commendable points of the book. Some people may dislike the book because of it. There are no slogans, no propaganda, no sweeping statements. Only what de Saint Jean saw and thought, told in an undertone and with an unflinching, and *per se* quite elegant self-effacement.

"And what has it got to do with Japan?" Everything. It tells us how a democracy chose butter, alias business as usual. Have we not, for eighteen months, piled scorn and insults on that France-which-was-not-ready? But now that we have had Pearl Harbor, "France Speaking" is absolutely up to date.

CLAIRE HUCHET BISHOP.

Getting Us into War. Porter Sargent. Porter Sargent. $4.00.

HERE is a compendium of news items, facts, and one-sided observations by a very provocative man. Its core is a collection of weekly bulletins, enlarged by copious notes, which Mr. Sargent issued from May, 1939, to March, 1941. Obviously, Mr. Sargent failed in his mission, but the book is not outmoded, for it is historically important as the best and most complete record of the position of the extreme isolationist.

The basic criticism of the book is unchanged by our entrance into war. Mr. Sargent's thesis was that Britain, with its willing helper, President Roosevelt, was trying to get us into war. But the important question all along has been whether Britain had a right to do so, by reason of the fact that she represented right as opposed to wrong, as at least the lesser of two evils. Mr. Sargent can hardly censure Britain for fighting Germany because she threatened England's trade since he advocates appeasement of Japan because she is a better customer than China and a better longtime business bet.

But I believe the book is still worth the reading as a lesson for the future. Both its truth and its error now shine brilliantly from the light of December 7. It reveals the terrible confusion within the extreme camps during America's war of nerves. It illustrates the failure to distinguish between expediency and morality. On the positive side, it contains facts and statistics which we need now more than ever if a just peace is to follow. And, unless Mr. Sargent is misquoting US Treasury figures, his exposé of the myth that "Finland pays her debts" is an example that even in a free country truth may not out.

EMERSON HYNES.

BRIEFERS

Alfred I. duPont, The Family Rebel. Marquis James. Bobbs. $4.50.

"COME AGAIN!" the late Alfred I. duPont would cry on his return from the Continent! "And, as usual, say to Hell with Europe and hurray for the United States." Although the late Alfred I. was continually given to such interjections, he is none the less the subject of a 542-page biography by Marquis James. James, who was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for his work on Andrew Jackson, knights his new hero "The Family Rebel." The rebel managed somehow to leave an estate of $60,000,000. In this, easily the most authorized biography of 1941, James traces with formidable perseverance the career of the dullard who championed Pierre duPont's right to dominate the family corporation. James was once a biographer. With practice he may become our most competent gilder of mediocrities.

The American Artist and His Times. Homer Saint Gaudens. Dodd. $5.00.

SAINT GAUDENS, son of the sculptor and Director of the Department of Fine Arts of the Carnegie Institute, has written a conversational, indiscriminate but kindly history of American painting. It should be perused by the glow of a cheery grate fire.

Sophia. St. John Ervine. Macmillan. $2.50.

BEFORE this story has hardly begun, our heroine dies. But there is no rest for her: "Sophia" hovers curiously about the Anglican household in Great Torping and observes with both satisfaction and horror the affectionate demonstrations, the realistic business connected with her burial. Then follow detailed reminiscences of religious parlor arguments with her admirable father which, as we go on, becomes too apparently the author's voice in a whisper recognizable as hoarse. (Even the poems quoted during the conversations, while appropriate, are so uncommon and lengthy that one visualizes scissors and glue-pot rather than lips which move.) In other words, "Sophia" and her associates are excellent characterizations who are lost by Mr. Ervine's theological free-wheeling into a region he must call, in dead seriousness, intellectual.

Storm. George Stewart. Random. $2.50.

RATHER successful *tour de force* which makes a storm from the Pacific the chief protagonist of a novel. Its effects on the lives of a score of characters widely scattered in locale and differing markedly as to walks of life are nearly all bad if not fatal. Nice juxtaposition of scientific terminology and lunchroom chatter.

Ninth National Eucharistic Congress. Published by the Executive Committee: Thomas J. Shanahan, Chairman, Historical Records Committee. $1.50.

THE OFFICIAL HISTORY and record of the Eucharistic Congress held last summer in Minnesota's twin cities has been published in a volume of definite historical and educational value. In 293 pages, the technical job of holding the Congress, the addresses delivered, reports of the sectional meetings, together with a score of photographs are gathered together for permanent knowledge and understanding. It is a work of living American Church history.

Chronicles of the First Crusade. Fulcher of Chartres. Translated by Martha Evelyn McGinty. Pennsylvania. $1.00.

WITH THIS excellent volume the University of Pennsylvania commences the third series of its admirable "translations and reprints from the original sources of history." It is the first book of the chronicles of Fulcher of Chartres, presented in good English, with good brief footnotes, an index and bibliography. Books of the series are designed to be "complete enough to give a proper picture of the work translated and at the same time brief enough so that they could be easily adapted for classroom use." The general reader in history, and those particularly interested in medieval history or the history of the crusades, will find this especially attractive and certainly useful.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE CATHOLIC POETRY SOCIETY
OF AMERICA, INC.

PROMOTES a Catholic tradition of poetry;

PUBLISHES *Spirit, a Magazine of Poetry;*

BUYS for publication only from members of the Society;

MAINTAINS a *Bureau of Criticism* of poetry free to its members;

CONDUCTS meetings of poets and lovers of poetry through local chapters throughout the country;

PUBLISHES the *C.P.S.A. Bulletin* sent free to all members.

A UNION OF POETS
Which

. . . challenges the "isms" of current secular poetry.

. . . collectively can aid the poet in ways closed to individual effort.

. . . is now completing its eleventh year of success.

. . . has been blessed by Pope Pius XII.

. . . has been endorsed by ecclesiastical, educational and literary leaders.

SPIRIT

Published bi-monthly by the Society, *Spirit* is widely reputed to be the leading poetry magazine in America today. No one, who appreciates poetry and wishes to be au courant to what is being written today, should be without it.

It needs the support of all interested in Catholic literature to survive and to continue to assert its message of spiritual values over materialistic teachings.

The Catholic Poetry Society of America, Inc.
386 4th Ave., New York, N. Y.

☐ Herewith is $2.00 to enroll me as a member.

☐ Herewith is $2.00 for a year's subscription to *Spirit,* beginning with the current issue.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____

The Inner Forum

THE URSULINES of the Roman Union, with their Generalate in Rome, have brought out their first literary annual in commemoration of their four hundredth anniversary. The editor is Mother Agatha of the Ursuline Academy of Wilmington, Del., and the volume contains short essays on Chaucer, Cicero, Saint Augustine, Dante, Saint Teresa of Avila and Saint Francis de Sales, Newman, François Jammes, the Book of Wisdom.

The Very Reverend Mother Marie de St. Jean Martin, Prioress General, says of education, "The ideal is to break nothing, to destroy nothing in the child, to understand all the susceptivities of his soul, to develop all his capacities, in order to lead him through the crisis of adolescence to the state of an adult fully developed in mind and body and, at the same time, to form in him the new man, the image of Christ." Mother Berenice Rice, O.S.U., of the College of New Rochelle, writes, "In founding the Ursuline Order . . . Saint Angela Merici set up training for family life as one of the prime objectives in the education of women. . . . Since the mother's influence is purely personal, she stressed the personal formation of the young girl through education of the heart and will."

Saint Angela was born in 1474 at Desenzano, Lombardy. At the age of twenty she began in her home to teach the young girls of her native town the rudiments of their religion. It was at this period that Angela learned from a vision that she was to found an order which would devote itself to the religious training of young girls. She was invited to found a new school in the neighboring city of Brescia, where many years later she founded the Ursuline Order (November 25, 1535).

At first the Ursulines lived in their own homes, working among the people and meeting regularly with their superior. Then in 1566 Saint Charles Borromeo asked them to undertake the religious education of young girls in the diocese of Milan and suggested that they adopt a uniform dress, live in community and place themselves under a bishop's jurisdiction. They were raised to the rank of a Religious Order in 1612, and by 1939 had established 240 houses and numbered 7,500 professed religious. In 1727 the first Ursuline Convent in the United States was founded in New Orleans.

CONTRIBUTORS

T. Swann HARDING is himself connected with the Department of Agriculture and has written extensively on such questions as pure food and drug legislation, the economic nature of the war. The second part of his article will appear next week.

Otto STRASSER was closely associated with Adolf Hitler in the early days of the Nazi Party. He is now the most prominent former nazi in opposition.

Rev. Bonaventure SCHWINN, O.S.B., is subprior of St. Benedicts Abbey, Atchison, Kansas.

George STREATOR is at present connected with the OPM.

Theodore MAYNARD'S most recent book is "The Story of American Catholicism."

Maurice LAVANOUX is secretary of the Liturgical Arts Society.

Sister MARIELLA, O.S.B., teaches English at St. Benedict's College, St. Joseph, Minn.

James Edward TOBIN is on the faculty of Fordham University.

Rev. Walter LE BEAU teaches religion at the College of St. Thomas, St. Paul, Minn.

Rev. Ansgar NELSON, O.S.B., is a monk of St. Gregory's Priory, Portsmouth, R. I.

Claire Huchet BISHOP writes children's books and criticism for literary periodicals.

Emerson HYNES is on the staff of St. John's College, Collegeville, Minn.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED